Province of British Columbia
Ministry of Forests
and Lands

F. S. 189 (1) INF 83/5

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LOWER STIKINE RIVER

RECREATION CORRIDOR

MANAGEMENT PLAN

December 1988
Ministry of Forests

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION 1

1.1 Background 1
1.2 Study Objectives 4

2. MANAGEMENT PLAN DEVELOPMENT 6

2.1 Issues and Concerns 9
2.1.1 Access 10
2.1.2 Timber Harvesting 10
2.1.3 Mining Exploration and Development Management 10
2.1.4 Recreation 11
2.1.5 Fish and Wildlife 11
2.1.6 The Tahltan People 12
2.1.7 Non Native Traditional Activities . . 14
2.1.8 Land Alienation 14
2.1.9 Monitoring and Policing 14
2.1.10 Cumulative effects of Resource Development 14

2.2 Goals and Objectives 16
2.2.1 Recreation Values 17
2.2.2 Commercial Timber Harvesting 18
2.2.3 Mineral Exploration and Development . 20
2.2.4 Fish Values 22
2.2.5 Wildlife Values 23
2.2.6 The Tahltan People 23
2.2.7 Non Native Traditional Activities . . 24
2.2.8 Heritage Values 24

2.3 Projected Use and Facility Requirements 25

3.0 MANAGEMENT PLAN IMPLEMENTATION 25

3.1 Initial Steps 25
3.2 Regulatory Requirements 26
3.3 Boundary Designation 27
3.4 Research Requirements 27
3.5 Monitoring Programs 28

4.0 MANAGEMENT PLAN REVIEW 28

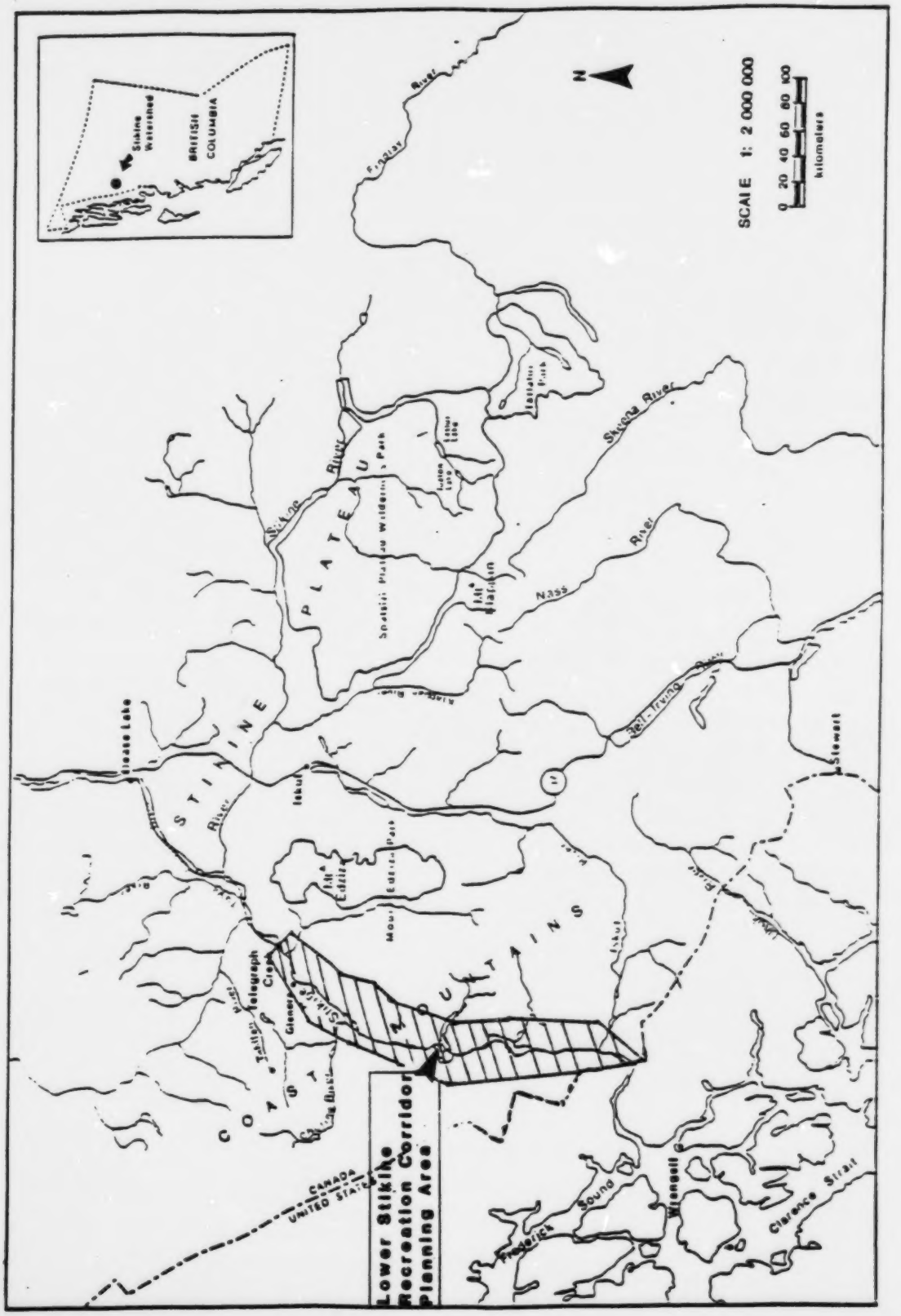
LIST OF APPENDICES

1. Timber Values and Management Guidelines

2. Mineral Values

3. Proposed Recreation Corridor Boundary Map

Lower Stikine River Recreation Corridor Planning Area



1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND

The Lower Stikine River flows through northwest British Columbia adjacent to the Alaskan Panhandle and enters the Pacific Ocean near Wrangell, Alaska. The Lower Stikine Recreation Corridor Management Plan refers to the stretch of river from Telegraph Creek to the Alaskan border.

Once a "working" river utilized by native people, gold miners, fur traders and others seeking a route to the interior prior to the widespread use of aircraft and the development of roads from the south, the Lower Stikine today serves a dual role of providing a livelihood for local residents (particularly from salmon fishing) and exciting wilderness opportunities for recreationists. The demands placed upon the river have therefore broadened considerably over the past very few decades.

There has for some time been widespread public interest in preserving the Stikine, based on the spectacular scenery and wilderness character of the environment, the opportunities to view a wide variety of wildlife, and the opportunity for paddlers of moderate skills to undertake a multi-day float trip from source to mouth (with portage around the Grand Canyon) in a wilderness setting. Because of its topography, British Columbia does not have many rivers with this combination of

features. In the early 1970's Parks Canada identified the Stikine as a candidate for inclusion in a national wild rivers system then being considered.

As a result of public sentiment in favour of protecting the wild and scenic characteristics of the Stikine, the entire river was one of the areas considered by the Wilderness Advisory Committee in 1986. With regard to the lower Stikine, the Committee noted in its report that "the development of a transportation corridor associated with resource development could adversely affect the scenic and recreation values". The Committee recommended that a Scenic Corridor be established along the lower Stikine to protect scenic values, the boundaries of which should be from the river to the top of the first ridge on either side. Subsequent to the release of the Committee's Report, the Stikine from Telegraph Creek upstream to the Spatsizi Plateau Wilderness Provincial Park has been designated a Recreation Area under the administration of the Ministry of Parks.

The Wilderness Advisory Committee recommendations, and the need to reconcile public demands to protect the wilderness quality of the Stikine with the requirements of non-recreation resource activities in the lower river, have led the Forest Service (the government agency with primary management responsibility in the area) to recommend that the river from Telegraph Creek downstream to the Alaskan border be designated a Recreation Corridor.

The Recreation Corridors Program, announced in September 1984, was designed as a procedure for citizens and government agencies to work together to identify, protect and manage the recreation values of the significant trails and waterways in British Columbia.

In July 1985, the Recreation Corridors System Plan was released by the then Ministry of Lands, Parks and Housing. The Plan was developed through consultation and cooperation with the Ministry of Forests and the Outdoor Recreation Council of B.C. It provides for three categories of Recreation Corridors - Primitive/Wilderness, Semi-Primitive, and Rural/Urban. The System Plan identifies the Stikine as a candidate Recreation Corridor.

The Lower Stikine River has all the components of an excellent recreational river. Telegraph Creek and Wrangell make for accessible starting and finishing points for a five day or longer float trip on a river that, at moderate to low water levels, is navigable for most watercraft. Among its many features are superb scenery, good camp spots, abundant wildlife, fishing at tributary confluences, and islands, sandbars and side streams worth investigating. Of particular interest are the many glaciers as the river cuts through the Coast Mountains - especially the Great Glacier, a feature of provincial significance. Despite a number of cabins and commercial

fishery installations, and use of the river by motorized boats, the Stikine remains essentially an unspoiled waterway, providing a recreational wilderness experience in a dramatically beautiful setting.

The Ministry of Forests recognizes the need to protect the landscape and recreational resources of the Lower Stikine River and has acted as the lead agency in the coordination of a Recreation Corridor Planning Study. This Draft Recreation Corridor Management Plan is an outcome of that study. The Plan is based on integrated resource management principles and has been developed through iterative stages of participatory public involvement.

The proposed Corridor boundaries (see Appendix 4) parallel the Stikine River from Telegraph Creek to the Alaskan border. The total length of river in the Corridor, from the northern boundary to the International Border, is approximately 169 kilometers. A portion of the Iskut River (upstream from the confluence of the Iskut and Stikine Rivers) is also covered in the study area. The proposed Corridor boundaries approximate the visible high and medium sensitivity areas as defined in the landscape inventory completed by Peepre and Associates in 1985.

1.2 STUDY OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the Recreation Corridor Planning Study were as follows:

1. To maintain a close, working relationship with the members of the working group identified to assist the Forest Service throughout the planning process.
2. To establish the final boundaries of the recreation corridor.
3. To formulate management objectives for the corridor relating to recreation, development, access, industrial and private uses, etc.
4. To identify the implications of different plan options as they may affect the government, various agencies, municipalities, resource users, local residents and the public at large.
5. To seek input from all concerned agencies, organizations and individuals.
6. To define the role of other agencies in implementation of plan specifics.
7. To specify appropriate management prescriptions for the Lower Stikine River Recreation Corridor.
8. To establish an action plan for the implementation of management prescriptions.

2.0 MANAGEMENT PLAN DEVELOPMENT

A number of reports prepared for previous planning projects were utilized as background material for this draft management plan, particularly the "Lower Stikine Planning Report" prepared by the Ministry of Forests in 1984. That report contains much of the background material relating to the resource base of the area and it remains a useful reference document for those interested in the Lower Stikine River.

The Lower Stikine River is being proposed as a Recreation Corridor. The B.C. Government's Recreation Corridors System Plan of 1985 provides guidelines relating to evaluation and designation criteria. Also provided are broad purposes and management objectives for primitive and semi-primitive waterways which are:

Primitive /Wilderness Category:

(i) Purpose - to protect and preserve the wild qualities of the waterway for low levels of recreational use.

(ii) Objectives - access is limited to the points of launch and egress.

- contains no impoundments, diversions or other modification of waterway.
- sufficient length to provide a wilderness experience.
- retain natural quality of resource with special or scenic features

- facilities will not be provided except for public safety or for minimizing user impact.

Semi-primitive to Roaded Resource Land Category

(i) Purpose - to maintain the natural setting of the waterway environment for intermediate levels of recreational use.

(ii) Objectives - access is permitted in order to enhance public ability to enjoy the waterway but may be controlled to preserve the recreational experience or to limit the impact on the waterway environment by either limiting the number of access points or by limiting the number of users.

- rivers should be free-flowing; however, minor alterations may be permitted provided that they do not detract from the natural qualities of the river environment.
- intensity of management and development is consistent with moderate levels of recreational use.
- recreational facilities will be limited and directed toward providing for public safety and minimizing user impact.

The approved management plan will take into consideration public responses to the draft Management Plan including whether or not Recreation Corridor registration is appropriate and if so under what category.

2.3 ISSUES AND CONCERNS

The following are issues and concerns presently known. Others may be identified through public consultation. These indicate the breadth of interest which must be dealt with in any management plan for the Lower Stikine. Lack of resolution of these items could create substantial implementation or management problems in future years.

2.1.1 ACCESS

- There is widespread public interest in maintaining the Stikine as a wilderness waterway. Following the general public perception of wilderness as a "roadless tract", road access development below Glenora may be viewed by a large segment of the public as incompatible with the objectives of maintaining the Stikine as a wilderness waterway.
- The Lower Stikine area is known to have significant mineral potential. The development and operation of some mines may be contingent on road access through the corridor.

- Under a long-standing international treaty with the United States, the Stikine must remain open to navigation by Canadian and U.S. citizens subject to the laws and regulations of each country. This agreement has not been an obstacle to the establishment by the U.S. Congress in 1980 of the Stikine LeConte Wilderness encompassing the Alaskan portion of the Stikine. However, increased use of the corridor as a transportation route by both air and water methods could conflict with corridor management objectives unless dealt with in the management plan.

- The Alaskan Government is interested in the development of a U.S./Canada connecting road access to Wrangell.

2.1.2 TIMBER HARVESTING

- Timber harvesting within the corridor could seriously impact upon the recreation and aesthetic values and conflict with public interest in preserving the Stikine.

- Limited commercial logging has taken place in the lower reaches for the Stikine (below the Choquette River) since the 1960's. The demand for logging still exists.

2.1.3 MINING EXPLORATION AND DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT

- Mineral exploration and development activities within the corridor could seriously impact recreation/aesthetic values, and conflict with public interest in preserving the Stikine.
- The mining community is concerned that Recreation Corridor registration may preclude access to mineral properties.

2.1.4 RECREATION

- the ability to maintain high quality wilderness recreation experiences, while accommodating the interests of industrial resource users, as well as local native and non-native concerns and traditional uses, presents a major management problem.
- Conflicts could arise between different types of recreational users (e.g. motorized vs non-motorized, commercial vs non-commercial).
- Crowding and loss of the "wilderness experience" sought by recreationists could occur.
- Uncontrolled recreation uses, particularly camping, could create management problems and reduce high quality recreation experiences.

2.1.5 FISH AND WILDLIFE

a) Fish

- The Lower Stikine is an important salmon river and supports spawning populations of all five Pacific salmon species, with chinook, sockeye and coho salmon predominating. These three species are utilized in commercial, Indian food fish and sports fisheries. The salmon are an important element of the river ecosystem, and help support populations of bears, eagles and seals likely to be seen by river travellers.
- Although much of the spawning and rearing habitat is located upstream of the Recreation Corridor, significant spawning and rearing does take place within it.
- Resident Dolly Varden Char along with steelhead and Cutthroat trout are present in the Lower Stikine and its tributaries
- Resource extraction activities could seriously impair the fishery by degrading critical habitat.

b) Wildlife

- Due to the remote location and absence of development, the Wildlife Branch, Ministry of Environment, has limited information in the size of wildlife populations or the nature and distribution of habitat. The most prominent

wildlife species which may be affected by resource development are moose, grizzly bear and eagles.

- A major wildlife concern at present in the area is for moose, particularly the need to maintain conifer cover on the moose winter range along the floodplain . The Lower Stikine is a high snowfall area, and wintering moose in the area appear to require mature spruce canopy, which moderates the snow depth and possibly provides thermal protection.
- Bald eagles nest in the valley bottom cottonwood trees and will require protection from disturbance.
- Grizzly bears occur throughout the corridor and may be expected to concentrate in important salmon spawning areas. It will be critically important to minimize people-bear conflicts.

2.1.6 THE TAHLTAN PEOPLE

- The Tahltan people inhabit the Stikine area. They have a number of concerns regarding Recreation Corridor registration and have presented the following:

"With regards to the Stikine Recreation Corridor, we are opposed to this plan at this time. Our reasons for opposition are as follows:

1. These recreational corridors are restricting the Tahltans from making a living, commercially or otherwise, within the corridor boundaries, eg.logging mining, guiding etc. Provisions in the management plan should allow the Tahltans economic ventures within the corridor. These corridors are right in the heart of our traditional territory.
2. We do not want to be grouped in with 'other legal residents'. For one thing, our people have occupied this territory for generations; therefore, our rights are not the same as other legal residents.
3. We want to make it clear that any parks, past, present or future, do not jeopardize our outstanding land claims settlements.
4. We definitely want our hunting, fishing and trapping rights entrenched in any agreements. We want to make sure that any agreements that are put in place for the Tahltans at this time will not prejudice future negotiations regarding our aboriginal land claim.

   We are holding this position not only for the recreational corridor, but for all past, present or future parks, recreation corridors or heritage reserves in our traditional area."

*Note: From letter of September 27, 1988, to the Native Affairs Secretariat form the Tahltan Tribal Council.

2.1.7 NON-NATIVE TRADITIONAL ACTIVITIES

- The Stikine River up to Telegraph Creek has historically been used as a trading and transportation route. The river is still used to some extent for commercial traffic and this is expected to continue.
- Guide/outfitting, hunting, trapping, commercial fishing, commercial recreation (rafting, boat charters, etc.) and non-commercial recreation have been occurring along the river for many decades. These must be addressed within the context of the Corridor Management Plan.

2.1.8 LAND ALIENATION

- There is an existing but limited demand for land alienations for commercial and non-commercial use. This demand is likely to increase and further land alienations could have an impact on the wildland recreation and aesthetic values within the corridor.

2.1.9 MONITORING AND POLICING

- The corridor is approximately 169 km in length. Existing staffing and funding levels will make monitoring and policing difficult.

2.3.10 CUMULATIVE EFFECTS OF RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

- One of the main Corridor Management objectives is to preserve and protect the wilderness character of the river and the recreation experience which this provides. While any single resource development, in itself, may not seriously degrade the recreational experience, the cumulative effects of various resource activities may change the wilderness character of the river and downgrade the recreational experience to one of a lesser quality. This must be addressed and closely monitored as part of an ongoing planning activity. The issues and concerns identified above indicate the importance of designing management strategies which address these, while providing for both resource protection and flexible use. In this way, the varied interests affected by the management plan can be adequately accommodated where possible and feasible.

2.2 GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Based on the foregoing, it is important that a clear direction be established for the Lower Stikine. At the same time, however, a number of potential conflicting resource opportunities and uses could very seriously affect the quality of the recreational experience along the river. The goals and objectives set out below provide broad management targets to indicate the direction and nature of the integrated management needed in planning for all permissible uses within the river corridor.

Goals set out the broad direction which programs should take. They relate to the variety of factors which shape the specific development program and provide management with an overall strategy for recreation use, resource use, environmental protection and conflict resolution. Objectives indicate the means by which goals will be achieved. Therefore, objectives are the initial descriptions of program requirements.

The overall corridor management goal is to protect the primitive, recreational, scenic and other aesthetic values of the Lower Stikine within an integrated resource management framework. The overall objectives are as follows:

a) recreational/aesthetic values which contribute to the essential character of the river and form the basis for possible Recreation Corridor nomination and to administer these within a delineated boundary permitting special management functions and goals; and

b) to permit a variety of compatible interest groups, whose use of the Lower Stikine River area does not irreparably impact upon recreation and aesthetic resources, are permitted to utilize the Lower Stikine River and environs.

c) to conduct non-recreational uses in a manner compatible with maintaining the aesthetic, wilderness and recreation values of the Lower Stikine;

d) to ensure that all resource agencies consider the objectives outlined in the management plan in the interagency referral process for all resource development applications within the corridor. Specific goals and objectives, relative to different uses of the river corridor follow.

2.2.1 RECREATION VALUES

GOAL

To provide for low impact recreation compatible with maintaining the natural character of the river corridor.

OBJECTIVES

1. To designate a corridor along the Stikine River from Telegraph Creek to the Alaskan border.

2. To delinate the boundaries of the recreation corridor necessary for the protection recreation and aesthetic values.

3. To establish site specific recreation management guidelines to protect scenic and wildland recreation values along the corridor.

4. To identify and develop as necessary appropriate campsites and hiking routes.

5. To protect fragile or sensitive sites from detrimental use.

6. To establish the carrying capacity of the river.

7. To evaluate and respond to applications for commercial recreation tenures, facilities and activities within the context of the recreation corridor management plan.

8. To develop impact monitoring programs for all recreation sites, such as campsites, trails and viewsites.

9. To retain the option of restricting recreational uses if and when unacceptable impacts of this activity are documented.

10. To publish a river route and hiking brochure which includes information on the natural history of the river and its features.

11. To enhance wildlife viewing opportunities where possible.

12. To provide information on safety and environmental ethics to river users including such things as potential navigational hazards and the need to pack out all garbage.

2.2.2 COMMERCIAL TIMBER HARVESTING

GOAL

To manage timber harvesting in order to maintain the natural character of the river so that the recreational experiences sought by visitors and wildlife, fish, heritage and other values are not impaired.

For timber management purposes the corridor is divided into three (3) management units. The timber management goals associated with these units are as follows:

Unit 1 - Telegraph Creek to the Chutine River

Timber harvesting is permitted in this unit for only local uses such as building materials, firewood, etc.

Unit 2 - Chutine River to Darsmith Creek

Timber harvesting in this unit is not permitted at this time as the river has been identified as being unnavigable for the booming of logs.

Unit 3 - Darsmith Creek to the International Boundary

To permit selective timber harvesting utilizing aerial methods only at this time. (See Appendix 1 for detailed management guidelines.)

OBJECTIVES

Where timber harvesting is permitted the following objectives will apply:

1. To manage all timber harvesting for a Visual Quality Objective (VQO) of Retention as viewed from the river. With a retention VQO, management activities must not be visually apparent, and the line, form, colour and texture of the characteristic landscape must be repeated.
2. To locate approved camps in unobtrusive sites not readily visible from the main river channel.
3. To ensure log handling sites are not readily visible from the main river channel. An adequate buffer strip shall be maintained to minimize visual impact for people travelling the river.
4. To retain adequate leave strips around the perimeter of the Stikine River. Leave strips should be not less than 50 metres deep.
5. To minimize the visual impact of log dumping sites.
6. To incinerate or otherwise dispose of refuse regularly from camp and log handling sites in accordance with government regulations.
7. To restore log handling and dump sites concurrent with the completion of operations at each landing.
8. Total harvesting plans must be submitted and approved prior to commencing operations.

9. Licensees will be responsible for basic silviculture which must comply with Recreation Corridor Management objectives.

10. In order to minimize potential impacts the watering, booming and transport of logs will generally be subject to the guidelines provided in Appendix II.

11. To retain the option of restricting timber harvesting if and when unacceptable impacts of this activity are documented.

2.2.3 MINERAL EXPLORATION AND DEVELOPMENT

GOAL

To manage mining exploration and development so as to maintain the natural character of the river and recreational experiences sought by visitors .

OBJECTIVES

1. To work closely with Ministry of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources in the development of site specific exploration guidelines and access restrictions in order to ensure that the needs of both the mining industry and the Recreation Corridor are met.

2. To ensure that management objectives for the Recreation Corridor are taken into consideration should the Mine Development Steering Committee need to evaluate a proposed mine development project.

3. Access for mineral exploration is preferably by air or water methods only.

4. To ensure that essential ground access adheres to a Retention Visual Quality objective, and be consistent with Recreation Corridor management objectives.

5. To deal with proposed ground access for a trail up to 5 metres in right-of-way width through the existing normal referral process and ensure that such access is consistent with recreation corridor management objectives.

6. To have proposed access roads greater than 5 meters right-of-way width receive thorough examination by the various resource agencies and ensure that such access is consistent with recreation corridor management objectives.

7. To ensure that any ground access created is subject to the "Guidelines for Mineral Exploration" prepared by the Ministry of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources in 1985.

8. To locate all exploration base camps in an unobtrusive manner which avoids negative aesthetic impacts for people travelling the river.

9. To ensure that the reclamation of all exploration camps is subject to the conditions outlined in the "Guidelines for Mineral Exploration" (see #7 above).

10. To retain the option of restricting mining activities if and when unacceptable impacts of this activity are documented.

2.2.4 FISH VALUES

GOAL

To manage the fisheries resource to protect and enhance fish populations and their habitat consistent with the objectives of the recreation corridor management plan.

The main fishery in the Lower Stikine Recreation Corridor Planning Area is the commercial harvesting centered downstream of the Iskut River, but extending above it. This fishery is in a developmental stage and may grow or change in the future. The Management Plan should recognize this and be flexible enough to accommodate it.

OBJECTIVES

1. To ensure that the migrations of salmon and other anadromous species are not obstructed.
2. To ensure that land and water-based activities do not degrade fish habitat.
3. To ensure that activities associated with commercial and sport fishery are carried out in accordance with the overall objectives for the corridor.

2.4.6 WILDLIFE VALUES

GOAL

To manage the wildlife resource to protect and where possible to enhance existing populations of wildlife.

OBJECTIVES

1. To acquire wildlife habitat and population information prior to any development activities which may have an impact on wildlife values.
2. To revise management plans as more information on wildlife and wildlife needs becomes available.
3. To maintain critical moose winter range.
4. To identify eagle nesting trees and leave them undisturbed, especially during the March-July nesting season.
5. To ensure complete incineration and removal of all garbage at any camp location to avoid attracting bears.
6. To ensure that all uses of the Corridor avoid negative impact on wildlife.

2.4.6 THE TAHLTAN PEOPLE

GOAL

To recognize the use of the Lower Stikine by the Tahltan people as a fundamental precept for any designation and management program.

OBJECTIVES

1. To involve the Tahltan people in the preparation and implementation of specific management and development programs.
2. To ensure provision of improved opportunities for Tahltan social and economic development consistent with the overall management objectives.

2.2.7 NON-NATIVE TRADITIONAL ACTIVITIES

GOAL

To ensure that opportunities for traditional non-native activities are maintained.

OBJECTIVES

To ensure that Recreation Corridor registration allows for ongoing non-native traditional activities such as guiding, outfitting, fishing, hunting, trapping and other activities consistent with the overall management objectives.

2.2.8 HERITAGE VALUES

GOAL

To protect important heritage sites within the Corridor.

OBJECTIVES

1. To contact the Heritage Conservation Branch prior to any resource development activities in an area where heritage values are identified.

2.3 PROJECTED USE AND FACILITY REQUIREMENTS

Studies have not been carried out to project future use of the Lower Stikine as a Recreation Corridor. However, use of the river for float trips has been increasing over the past decade, due in large part to publicity over the proposed dams in the Stikine Grand Canyon. It is safe to assume, therefore, that designation of the river as a Recreation Corridor and associated publicity will increase use of the Lower Stikine

substantially. As a starting and/or finishing point for river trips, Telegraph Creek is likely to require expanded accommodation and restaurant facilities, and have the opportunity to develop river guiding businesses.

3.0 MANAGEMENT PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

Because of the numerous issues requiring attention, the gaps in information, the need for public support and the need for more detailed planning and design prior to any facility development, the Lower Stikine Recreation Corridor Management Plan should be implemented in a incremental fashion. This section outlines the key implementation steps and identifies the major tasks that should follow adoption of the Management Plan.

3.1 INITIAL STEPS

Prior to formal Recreation Corridor designation, discussion with local residents and special interest groups should occur so that the implications of the designation are fully appreciated. Emphasis should be on the development of a cooperative approach to dealing with management issues.

3.2 REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS

Where possible, management programs should be premised on cooperation rather than regulation enforcement. In this way, local residents and other river users will be encouraged to assist in the management of "their river".

3.3 BOUNDARY DESIGNATION

Boundary designation should be finalized as soon as possible, following appropriate dialogue with local residents, interest groups and government agencies. Such boundary definitions should be by way of a written legal description, and users should be asked to abide by the boundaries. The intent of this approach is to provide guidelines for users without overly stressing regulatory boundary definition.

3.4 RESEARCH REQUIREMENTS

Considerable information has been collected, compiled and analyzed prior to, and during the course of preparing this Management Plan. For the most part, this information base has proven sufficient for the development of an overall Recreation Corridor management framework, and to establish general direction for recreation value protection measures and retention of traditional resource use activity. However, some additional upgraded baseline information will no doubt be required to establish detailed management strategies for specific resource and activity components within the Corridor.

3.5 MONITORING PROGRAMS

Mechanisms are required to monitor uses of the corridor and the response of the resource base to these uses. Monitoring should include the following:

- recreational activities (including impacts on campsites and trails)
- timber harvesting
- mineral exploration and development
- land alienations
- fishing
- hunting
- trapping

In addition, work should be undertaken to determine the perceptual carrying capacity of the river, to preserve the quality of the primitive recreational experience. A major component of this research could be a structured survey of Corridor visitors regarding their perceptions of crowding or "intrusions" on the natural character of the Corridor.

4.0 MANAGEMENT PLAN REVIEW

The Lower Stikine Recreation Corridor Management Plan is a document developed to deal with a dynamic situation, and it must be flexible to changes in the environment, in activity levels, and to new information on the area. One of the keys to ensuring such flexibility is the establishment of a

formal process to review and update the Plan to reflect changes in conditions and priorities. A Management Advisory committee should be established to assist the Forest Service in the review and updating of the management plan on an annual basis. This committee should be comprised of representatives from the various interests concerned with the Stikine. In addition, consultation with local people as well as other members of the public will be conducted as required.

APPENDIX 1

TIMBER VALUES AND MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES

The following presents the timber values and management guidelines for the three timber management units as outlined on Page 22 of the management plan.

Unit 1: Telegraph Creek to the Chutine River

Description:

This area lies within two biogeoclimatic zones, the Boreal White and Black Spruce zone and the Spruce-Birch-Willow zone with the former predominating at lower elevations. White and black spruce, balsam fir and lodgepole pine are the dominant and commercially important tree species of the coniferous forest.

To date forestry activities have been limited to local extraction for milled products, log homes and firewood. This level of activity in the forest sector is due to limited access to southern markets, a low consumer demand locally and a limited amount of commercially harvestable timber.

Goal:

Timber harvesting is permitted in this unit for local uses such as building materials, firewood, etc.

Guidelines:

Any timber harvesting must meet a Retention Visual Quality objective.

There is timber that has been identified outside the viewshed of the river which may be made available for commercial harvesting purposes. As this timber is outside the proposed recreation corridor and not within the viewshed, visual quality objectives have not been applied.

Unit 2: Chutine River to Darsmith Creek

Description:

The Coastal Western Hemlock zone extends from Darsmith Creek northward to approximately the Scud River, and is typified by closed forests dominated by western hemlock and/or Sitka spruce. The Interior Cedar Hemlock zone extends north of the Scud River to just south of the Chutine River. Western hemlock typically forms extensive, old-growth stands along this stretch, occasionally in combination with minor amounts of subalpine fir and spruce. Black cottonwood is common on all valley floodplain ecosystems.

Goal:

Although timber values are significant in this unit, timber harvesting is not permitted at this time as the river has been identified as being unnavigable for the booming of logs.

Unit 3: Darsmith Creek to the International Boundary

Description:

This area lies within the Coastal Western Hemlock zone and is typified by closed forests dominated by western hemlock and/or Sitka spruce. Black cottonwood is common on all valley floodplain ecosystems. This area has significant volumes of commercial value species and there is an existing demand for this wood. The river is considered navigable for the booming and transport of logs.

Goal:

To permit selective timber harvesting utilizing aerial methods only at this time.

Management Guidelines for Unit 3

1. Only selective harvesting utilizing helicopters or other aerial methods will be permitted.
2. In order to achieve a VQO of Retention, selective harvesting will be restricted to a maximum of 40% of the volume and 20% of the stems in any given stand.
3. Harvesting will not be permitted in the following areas:
   (i) areas associated with high recreational use in the vicinity of the Great Glacier
   (ii) area around Gleason Monument
   (iii) area around Tahltan fish processing facility
   (iv) area around Great Glacier Salmon fish processing facility
   (v) area in the vicinity of the Choquette Hot Springs.
4. Settings:
   (i) Settings must be referred to, and approved by the appropriate provincial and federal prior to commencement of cutting. It is anticipated that during the first year of operation there will be little time for response. DFO personnel will be available for on site inspection of proposed areas on short (14 day) notice;
   (ii) Subsequent years' applications should be planned to extend the review period. It would be best to have the following year's cutting plans available no later than August 1 of the year preceding the harvesting in question;

(iii) Trees may be harvested to the edge of fish bearing streams, but all branches, debris, etc. must be removed from the streams;

(iv) On steep slopes, branches and other debris should be removed from drainage courses to lessen the potential for debris torrents.

5. Landings and watering sites:

(i) All proposed landings and watering sites must be referred to and approved by the appropriate provincial and Federal agencies prior to preparation;

(ii) DFO personnel will be made available on 14 days notice to conduct on site inspection of the proposed landings;

(iii) Landings and settings for the second and subsequent years must be identified by August 1 of the year prior to use;

(iv) The immense variability of the sites in the area precludes meaningful guidelines being formulated. It is anticipated that each landing and watering site will be assessed, and conditions on its use placed as part of the approval process.

Little log storage is anticipated, however, application will be assessed on its own merits.

6. Log transport:

(i) Log transport by booming shall be undertaken during times of adequate water level, preferably during the time frame May 15 to July 1 in any year;

(ii) Minimum water depth in the main booming channel in the Stikine River should be 8 to 10 feet, and personnel involved in the transport of booms shall ensure that no scouring or contact with riverbanks, bars, or riverbeds shall occur;

(iii) Logs must be sorted and stored on dry land;

(iv) Logs must be bundled;

(v) Bundles must be prepared and stored on dry land, until booms are ready to be made up;

(vi) Log bundles shall be watered using techniques to prevent erosion or contact with unstable stream banks along the river (eg. watering with crane). Use of "brow logs" (skid logs) in unstable areas is unacceptable;

(vii) Lateral projection of logs from bundles must be minimized;

(viii) Booms must be stored for a minimal period of time only on the booming ground;

(ix) Floating debris must be contained by booms and regularly collected and disposed of away from stream channels;

(x) Transportation of booms must be undertaken utilizing vessels adequately powered, and operated by experienced, well-trained personnel, to effectively control boom movement in river channels;

(xi) Booms must be constructed of a size that can be safely transported and maneuvered to prevent streambank or streambed erosion, or destruction of private property (eg. fish nets, anchor lines, etc.);

(xii) Transportation of booms must not interfere directly or indirectly with any commercial fishing being undertaken on the river;

(xiii) Transport of booms should be undertaken during daylight hours only;

(xiv) Further operating conditions may be required should the need for additional protection become evident. The Development Plan must address these constraints and illustrate the strategies planned to operate within these guidelines.

7. Forest Protection Measures:

(i) The Spruce Bark Beetle is known to be at endemic levels in this area. Experience in this area has shown that the creation of beetle habitat through logging could lead to an epidemic situation. Suitable techniques for minimizing favourable bark beetle habitat must be identified in the development plan.

APPENDIX 2

MINERAL VALUES AND POTENTIAL IN THE LOWER STIKINE AREA

The following information was taken from a memo from David V. Lefebure, District Geologist, Ministry of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources to J.G. Snetsinger of the Ministry of Forests dated January 25, 1988.

Mineral Potential of the Lower Stikine Region:

Within the proposed Lower Stikine Recreation Corridor, there are approximately 20 mineral occurrences (see Figures 1 and 2). There are more than 100 mineral occurrences in the Lower Stikine region, including two large porphyry copper deposits east of the Stikine River. These are Galore Creek with 113 million tonnes of 1.08% copper, 0.397 grams gold per tonne and 7.94 grams silver per tonne and Schaft Creek with 910 million tonnes of 0.3% copper, 0.03% molybdenum, 0.113 grams gold per tonne and 0.992 grams silver per tonne. The entire Lower Stikine region has been poorly explored for mineral deposits because the access is so difficult.

Current exploration activity in the Lower Stikine region is along the Iskut River and east of the Stikine River. There is no record of companies exploring in the proposed recreation corridor in 1987.

In the past there has been mineral exploration along the Stikine River within the proposed recreation corridor. Most of this activity has been focused in three areas:

i) Porcupine River to Jack Wilson Creek;

ii) Dokdaon Creek; and

iii) Chutine River.

There are some claims inside the proposed recreation corridor along the Stikine River (L3630, L85, L475), near Dokdaon Creek (44626, 44627, 44636 and 44637), and on Kirk Creek (2371) and Chutine River (2368, 2369, 2370).

Locations with particularly notable mineral potential outside the proposed recreation corridor are:

i) Chutine River;

ii) Barrington River designated placer area;

iii) Scud River to Sphaler Creek area; and

iv) Iskut River area.

Future mines in all these areas could benefit from ground access along parts of the proposed recreation corridor.

In fact, exploration in the entire Lower Stikine region has only begun to reveal the mineral potential of the area. The same geological formations which host numerous mines and deposits in the Stewart mining camp continue north-northwest to beyond the Stikine River. There is every reason to expect that similar ore deposits to Silbak-Premier, Big Missouri, Scottie Gold and Granduc exist in the Lower Stikine region. This mineral potential must be recognized in any plans for the future of the region.

Conclusions:

1. The mineral potential of the Lower Stikine region is high, but difficult to properly assess due to the limited amount of exploration.

2. Several areas of demonstrated mineral potential exist within the proposed Lower Stikine recreation area. These are located:

   i) from Porcupine River to Jack Wilson Creek;

   ii) near Dokdaon Creek; and

   iii) close to Chutine River.

3. Access routes along the river valleys in the proposed recreation area, particularly along the Stikine and Iskut Rivers, could be essential to the development of future exploration projects and mines.